

I CLAIM:

1. A method of inducing a purchaser to visit a store at a remote location upon the purchase of a product from a supplier to pick up or to return the product  
5 comprising the steps of:

a) evaluating at least one retail outlet as a remote location, wherein each outlet may provide at least one benefit to the purchaser;

b) selecting at least one of those remote locations as suitable to the purchaser;

10 c) identifying to the purchaser at least one of the retail outlets and at least one associated benefit for pick up or return of the product; and

d) permitting the purchaser to select an outlet from those identified to pick up or return the product.

2. The method according to claim 1 further comprising the step of arranging for the purchaser to pick up or return the primary product at the selected outlet.

3. The method according to claim 1 wherein one benefit to the purchaser is reduced shipping cost.

4. The method according to claim 3 wherein the reduced shipping cost is calculated based upon marketing variables.

5. The method according to claim 4 wherein the marketing variables are comprised of at least one from the group of purchaser name, product purchased, store location, purchaser location, time of product pick up or return, identity of supplier and history of purchaser's buying in similar prior transactions.

6. The method according to claim 1 wherein the benefits to the purchaser may include at least one from the group of benefits comprised of:

a) a reduction in shipping cost to the purchaser ;

b) in-store credit or discount coupons;

5 c) the opportunity for the purchaser to inspect the product

- before it is picked up;
- d) the opportunity for the purchaser to delay payment until actually receiving the product;
- e) the opportunity for the purchaser to withhold payment if the product is not acceptable;
- f) the option for the purchaser to select an outlet at which to pick up the product;
- g) the opportunity to select the most convenient remote location in which to pick up or return a product from among a plurality of outlets; h) the opportunity to use a remote location for package pick up or delivery; and
- i) the opportunity to reduce the cost to ship the product in exchange for a guaranteed purchase in the remote location.

7. The method according to claim 1 wherein a benefit to the purchaser is a reduction in shipping cost and such a reduction is based upon marketing variables comprised of at least one from the group of purchaser name, product purchased, store location, purchaser location, time of product pick up or return, identity of supplier and history of purchaser's buying in similar prior transactions.

8. The method according to claim 1 wherein a benefit to the purchaser is an in-store credit and such a credit is based upon marketing variables comprised of at least one from the group of purchaser name, product purchased, store location, purchaser location, time of product pick up or return, identity of supplier and history of purchaser's buying in similar prior transactions.

9. A method of inducing a purchaser to visit a store at a remote location upon the purchase of a product from a supplier to pick up or to return the product comprising the steps of:

- a) identifying a plurality of remote locations as potential outlets;
- b) identifying a plurality of purchaser benefits that may be desired by a purchaser for selecting an outlet;

c) evaluating each remote location relative to each purchaser benefit;  
and

d) identifying to the purchaser one or more of the potential outlets  
10 and the correlation of the outlet to the benefits, thereby permitting the purchaser to select  
an outlet based upon one or more benefits.

10. The method according to claim 9 further including the step of  
arranging for the purchaser to pick up or return the primary product at the selected outlet.

11. The method according to claim 9 wherein one benefit to the  
purchaser is reduced shipping cost.

12. The method according to claim 11 wherein the reduced shipping  
cost is calculated based upon marketing variables.

13. The method according to claim 12 wherein the marketing  
variables are comprised of at least one from the group of purchaser name, product  
purchased, store location, purchaser location, time of product pick up or return, identity  
of supplier and history of purchaser's buying in similar prior transactions.

14. The method according to claim 9 wherein the benefits to the  
purchaser may include at least one from the group of benefits comprised of:

- a) a reduction in shipping cost to the purchaser;
- b) in-store credit or discount coupons;
- 5 c) the opportunity for the purchaser to inspect the product  
before it is picked up;
- d) the opportunity for the purchaser to delay payment until  
actually receiving the product;
- e) the opportunity for the purchaser to withhold payment if  
10 the product is not acceptable;
- f) the option for the purchaser to select an outlet at which to  
pick up the product;
- g) the opportunity to select the most convenient remote

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location in which to pick up or return a product from among a plurality of outlets;

- h) the opportunity to use a remote location for package pick up or delivery; and
- i) the opportunity to receive reduced shipping cost of the product in exchange for a guaranteed purchase in the remote location.

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15. The method according to claim 9 wherein a benefit to the purchaser is a reduction in shipping cost and such a reduction is based upon marketing variables comprised of at least one from the group of purchaser name, product purchased, store location, purchaser location, time of product pick up or return, identity of supplier and history of purchaser's buying in similar prior transactions.

16. The method according to claim 9 wherein a benefit to the purchaser is an in-store credit and such a credit is based upon marketing variables comprised of at least one from the group of purchaser name, product purchased, store location, purchaser location, time of product pick up or return, identity of supplier and history of purchaser's buying in similar prior transactions.

17. A method of inducing a purchaser to visit a store at a remote location upon the purchase of a product from a supplier to pick up or to return the product comprising the steps of:

- a) identifying a plurality of remote locations as potential outlets;
- b) identifying a plurality of purchaser benefits that may be desired by a purchaser for selecting an outlet;
- c) evaluating each remote location relative to each purchaser benefit;
- d) identifying a plurality of benefits to an outlet that may be desired by an outlet serving the purchaser;
- e) evaluating each purchaser relative to each outlet benefit;
- f) selecting one or more remote locations based upon a combination of purchaser benefits and outlet benefits;
- g) assigning a weight to each purchaser benefit and each outlet

benefit; and

- 15                    h)        identifying such selected locations to the purchaser.

18.        The method according to claim 17 further including the step of arranging for the purchaser to pick up or return the product at the selected outlet.

19.        The method according to claim 17 wherein one benefit to the purchaser is reduced shipping cost.

20.        The method according to claim 19 wherein the reduced shipping cost is calculated based upon marketing variables.

21.        The method according to claim 20 wherein the marketing variables are comprised of at least one from the group of purchaser name, product purchased, store location, purchaser location, time of product pick up or return, identity of supplier and history of purchaser's buying in similar prior transactions.

22.        The method according to claim 17 wherein the benefits to the purchaser may include at least one from the group of benefits comprised of:

- 5                    a)        a reduction in shipping cost;
- b)        in-store credit or discount coupons;
- c)        the opportunity for the purchaser to inspect the product before it is picked up;
- d)        the opportunity for the purchaser to delay payment until actually receiving the product;
- 10                   e)        the opportunity for the purchaser to withhold payment if the product is not acceptable;
- f)        the option for the purchaser to select an outlet at which to pick up the product; and
- g)        the opportunity to select the most convenient remote location in which to pick up or return a product from among a plurality of outlets;
- 15                   h)        the opportunity to use a remote location for package pick

up or delivery; and

- i) the opportunity to receive reduced shipping cost of the product in exchange for a guaranteed purchase in the remote location.

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23. The method according to claim 17 wherein a benefit to the purchaser is a reduction in shipping cost and such a reduction is based upon marketing variables comprised of at least one from the group of purchaser name, product purchased, store location, purchaser location, time of product pick up or return, identity of supplier and history of purchaser's buying in similar prior transactions.

24. The method according to claim 17 wherein a benefit to the purchaser is an in-store credit and such a credit is based upon marketing variables comprised of at least one from the group of purchaser name, product purchased, store location, purchaser location, time of product pick up or return, identity of supplier and history of purchaser's buying in similar prior transactions.

25. The method according to claim 17 wherein the step of selecting one or more remote locations as outlets is comprised of assigning a weight to each purchaser benefit and to each outlet benefit and selecting only those outlets which meet a pre-specified weighing criteria.

26. A method of inducing a retail outlet to act as remote location for product pick up or return by the purchaser comprising the steps of:

- a) evaluating at least one retail outlet as a remote location, wherein each outlet may provide at least one benefit to the purchaser;
- b) selecting at least one of those remote locations as suitable to the purchaser;
- c) identifying to the purchaser at least one of the retail outlets and at least one associated benefit for pick up or return of the primary product;
- d) permitting the purchaser to select an outlet from those identified to pick up or return the primary product;
- e) assembling a purchaser profile based upon information about the

purchaser; and

f) providing some or all of the information in the purchaser profile to the retail outlet for direct marketing by the retail outlet to the purchaser.

27. The method according to claim 26 wherein the step of assembling the purchaser profile is performed by extracting information provided by the purchaser, wherein such information is necessary for processing the purchase order and for delivery of the product to a retail outlet.

28. The method according to claim 27 wherein the step of assembling the purchaser profile is performed by extracting information provided by the purchaser, wherein such information is beyond that necessary for processing the purchase order and for delivery of the product to a retail outlet.

29. The method according to claim 26 further including the step of direct marketing to the purchaser based upon information in the purchaser profile.

30. The method according to claim 29 wherein the direct marketing may be provided before, during or after the purchaser visits the selected retail outlet.

31. The method according to claim 30 wherein the direct marketing is comprised of providing to the purchaser at least one benefit from the group consisting of coupons, in-store credit and reduced cost for shipping.

32. The method according to claim 26 wherein one benefit to the purchaser is reduced shipping cost.

33. The method according to claim 32 wherein the reduced shipping cost is calculated based upon marketing variables.

34. The method according to claim 33 wherein the marketing variables are comprised of at least one from the group of purchaser name, product purchased, store location, purchaser location, time of product pick up or return, identity

of supplier and history of purchaser's buying in similar prior transactions.

35. The method according to claim 26 wherein a benefit to the purchaser is a reduction in shipping cost and such a reduction is based upon marketing variables comprised of at least one from the group of purchaser name, product purchased, store location, purchaser location and time of product pick up or return.

36. The method according to claim 26 wherein a benefit to the purchaser is an in-store credit and such a credit is based upon marketing variables comprised of at least one from the group of purchaser name, product purchased, store location, purchaser location and time of product pick up or return.

37. The method according to claim 26 further including the step of connecting marketing messages to the purchaser prior to, at the time of, or after product pick up.

38. The method according to claim 37 further including the basing the marketing messages upon information that may be known by the administrator such as identity of the purchaser and the time the purchaser will be traveling to a certain retail outlet to pick up or drop off a product.

39. A method of direct marketing to individuals visiting a store at a remote location for pick up or return of a pre-ordered product comprising the steps of:

- a) receiving information about the individual prior to the store visit;
- b) using this information to direct market to the individual before,  
5 during or after the store visit.

40. The method according to claim 39 wherein the direct marketing is comprised of providing at least one from the group of a reduction in shipping cost, in-store credit, customized advertisements and cross-selling opportunities.

41. The method according to claim 40 wherein the direct marketing is comprised of the step of providing a reduction in shipping cost based upon marketing



variables.

42. The method according to claim 41 wherein the marketing variables are comprised of at least one from the group of purchaser name, product purchased, store location, purchaser location, time of product pick up or return, identity of supplier and history of purchaser's buying in similar prior transactions.

43. The method according to claim 40 wherein the direct marketing is comprised of the step of providing in-store credit based upon marketing variables.

44. The method according to claim 43 wherein the marketing variables are comprised of at least one from the group of purchaser name, product purchased, store location, purchaser location, time of product pick up or return, identity of supplier and history of purchaser's buying in similar prior transactions.

45. A method of direct marketing to individuals visiting a store at a remote location to send a product to or pick up a product sent from another destination comprising the steps of:

- a) receiving information about the individual prior to the store visit;
- b) using this information to direct market to the individual before, during or after the store visit.

46. The method according to claim 45 wherein the direct marketing is comprised of providing at least one from the group of a reduction in shipping cost, in-store credit, customized advertisements and cross-selling opportunities.

47. The method according to claim 46 wherein the direct marketing is comprised of the step of providing a reduction in shipping cost based upon marketing variables.